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Fox&Hounds discusses and explains the confluence of politics and business in California through our blog, featuring opinion pieces written by leaders from across the state published daily. Read below to see what's new on the site today.

State Gas Tax Plan Following Path of Federal Health Care Bill
By Joel Fox

The governor and legislative leaders came out from behind closed doors with a transportation tax and road fix plan and demand to pass the measure through the legislature in one week. Feels a lot like the federal experience with the health care reform bill. And, like that measure, despite one party controlling the executive and legislative branch, the bill might not find necessary support.
The campaign to pressure wavering legislators to get behind the bill kicked off yesterday in Concord with a lineup of Governor Jerry Brown, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon and Senate President pro tem Kevin De León teaming up with union members to visit Senator Steve Glazer's district and convince Brown's one-time aide to publicly embrace the tax increase.
I seem to remember unions opposed Glazer when he first ran because of his stand against BART strikes. Different time and different unions, perhaps, but Glazer is still behind that issue. There are indications that Glazer is holding out for a no-strike provision in the transportation bill before he decides if he will support it.
While Brown, De León and Rendon will play old-fashioned political hard ball with legislative members in attempting to secure the needed two-thirds vote to pass the tax increases, ultimately individual legislators are going to have to be satisfied that their constituents will swallow the tax increase.

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Universal Health Care Proposals Would Add Significant Fiscal Pressure to California's Finances
By David Kersten

After a long hiatus legislative proposals to create a government run health care system in the California are back on the Democrat progressive political agenda.
The key question is can California afford to go it alone on health care by enacting its own single-payer health care system?
Two of the state's leading progressive lawmakers say that it can be done and are in the process of putting forward proposals to move the state toward a single-payer health care system which would put a state government panel in charge of administering health care in California.
Earlier this month Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom, a progressive Democrat frontrunner for California Governor in 2018, said he was working with health care experts to craft a plan for a single-payer system. While he was mayor, the city approved a plan to offer universal health care for all of its residents, according to a recent report by the New York Times.
Meanwhile, State Senator Ricardo Lara (D-Bell Gardens) has amended his SB 562, The Healthy California Act, from a spot bill into a full 38-page bill to set up government run health care in California.

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What Is the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Hiding?

By Michele Hanisee

Trust us, they said. We know what's good for you and the state of California.
That was the message hawked by Gov. Jerry Brown and the state Legislature when they pushed and passed a variety of initiatives that gutted the criminal justice system. They did so by weakening parole (AB 109), downgrading a host of crimes to misdemeanors (Prop. 47), and making dangerous felons eligible for release when they have served just a portion of their sentences (Prop. 57).
Governor Brown and his allies sold these laughably flawed programs by cynically invoking compassion, fiscal prudence and an obligation to open prison gates to comply with court orders. Crime began rising throughout the state shortly after the dismantling of our safety net began. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence that state voters should not have bought the snake oil from its peddlers.

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LA's Measure H Campaign Relied on Public Funds, Charity Funds, and Clout
By Susan Shelley

It's official. L.A. County voters have passed another increase in the sales tax, making it 9.5 percent starting on July 1.
On election night, the sales tax increase was barely ahead of the two-thirds vote needed for passage, but then it carried 73 percent of the 283,029 late-absentee and provisional ballots counted later, one-third of the total votes cast. The final margin of victory was 69.34 percent to 30.66 percent.
It was no surprise to the measure's supporters, who had declared victory long before the final totals were announced, even though there were more than enough uncounted ballots to change the outcome.
What made the proponents so confident? History certainly was not on their side. According to the registrar-recorder's office, this was the first tax increase proposal ever attempted in a low-turnout March election, and officials checked the records all the way back to 1902.

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